

Public Meeting of the North Bay Water System
January 15, 2004

Mayor Mickey Marse opened the meeting at 7pm. January 15, 2004. Council members present were as follows: Janice McLean, Scott Brannon, and Jean Arrant. Also present was City Engineer Charles Peters, City Clerk Diane Riley, City employees, David Fannin, Larry Tuggle, Brooke Jackson and Al Wilson.

Mayor Marse apologized for the length of time taken to get the upgrade started. He noted that there would be inconveniences when the water lines are being placed in the ground. He further asked the residents to bare with the City during times of interruptions. He stated that existing lines would be cut during placement of new lines because the City did not put in the existing system and has no idea were the lines are today. He assured the audience that all lines would be repaired prior to leaving the construction area each day, thus everyone would have water service during the evening. At this time the Mayor opened the floor with any questions about the construction.

Where is the water coming from?

From the City's new well at the end of Eastern Street in Choctaw Beach, with an emergency backup from Okaloosa Water Authority.

What happens to the existing wells?

Personal wells are not the City's concern, the 4 wells owned by the City must be capped and sealed off; it is unknown of what will happen to the property at this time.

What will it cost the residents and where will the meters be located?

Base rate is \$13.00 per household for 2500 gallons, per month. Each additional 1000 gallons is calculated by a rate charge. Meters will be on the right-of-way next to the road. If you presently have a meter located else where on your property you will be required to relocate your water line from the meter to the dwelling.

Who's funding this project?

City of Freeport and USDA-Rural Development, at a cost of 3.2 million dollars.

Where is meter going on a vacant lot?

You will be given a stake to place on the right of way in the approximate area you would like the meter.

What happens to the old meter?

The City will pull it if on the right of way and take it with them, if on personnel property the owner can have the old meter.

If water line is going down only one side of road, how will I get water on the other side?

If you are on a dirt road then it will just be dug under dirt, most water lines will be on both sides of the road. During planning, road bores were planned for customers already or signed up to get water to them. If you did not sign up for the upgrade, then you will have to pay for a road bore at the time you request service.

What will happen if Bluewater Bay is unable to furnish water in an emergency?

The well will have a backup generator if electricity goes out.

What is the City doing about a company coming to the industrial park that can potentially damage the water supply?

Mayor Marse stated that there are enough regulations in place to oversee any damage that this company could cause and the City of Freeport was not going to regulate this company. He stated that the City has certainly been watched by DEP, EPA and many other governmental agencies and feels they will oversee all permitting and violations.

Who drafted the right of way?

Charles Peters explained that we received the maps from the state, and that’s how the water pipes were designed to run. There will be a map available after the meeting for anyone to talk with Charles about.

Who will flow test the fire hydrants?

The City will during construction, afterwards it will be the Fire Departments responsibility.

During construction will there be open trenches and driveways trenched during the evenings and weekends?

Absolutely not, there will be an inspector on the job during construction, and the contractor will have to cover up all excavation each day. We will trench during the day and your driveway may be open, but will be covered in as soon as possible, not to obstruct your way in and out to your home. Cards are provided tonight with phone numbers to contact the City if there are problems.

Where is the construction beginning?

Line construction is starting in Villa Tasso and moving east to the well site. The tank and well drilling site is being prepared now, road bores have started.

What are the connection fees?

If you signed up for the upgrade, you were offered a \$62.50 security deposit, with a minimum monthly billing of \$13.00 for 60 months. If you were already on the system you are automatically getting the upgrade with no requirement of paying for 60 months, just a minimum bill plus usage over the 2500 gallons. The cost for a meter today is \$1025.00 and a security deposit of \$62.50.

How much time is the City going to give residents to hookup to the new system?

Charles stated 30-60 days to make the connection to their dwelling.

Whom and how is the City notifying residents when a break or water contamination occurs?

The water company is regulated by DEP, EPA and the county health department. When a break occurs we are to follow their requirements. The water operator notifies the appropriate authorities and they direct him on what to do. There have been problems with notification due to the rural area that can be affected. Several residents offered contact points for the operator to alert if a problem should arise. It is well known that a problem exists with the notification, yet under no circumstances will the residents be allowed to drink contaminated water. A City employee would go house to house if needed. The City is required to submit a consumer confidence report annually that each any person has the right to review. The Mayor added that everyone should put a check valve on their dwelling so if the water is interrupted the owners would not experience a burned up HWH or other damage. The City of Freeport will not take responsibility for HWH problems occurring during and after construction.

Are there specifications on the water line that is needed to run to the dwelling?

Each dwelling will have a ¾ meter and the City employees will assist the owner on what is needed at the time of hookup.

With no more questions Mayor Marse closed the meeting at 7:45 pm.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

J.M. Marse, Mayor

Diane Riley, City Clerk

Janice McLean, President of Council